

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Objections

The Examiner made minor objections to claims 6 and 17 and suggested certain amendment be made. The suggested amendments have been made by the response.

Specification Objection

The Examiner made an objection to the abstract. The abstract has been amended by the response with an eye to addressing the issue raised by the Examiner. However, the Examiner's assertion that the abstract was in form of a claim is not correct. The abstract had (and still has) a verb "is" (note "A process is described ...") which clearly distinguished it from a claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112 second paragraph

Claims 1-19 were rejected since they do not begin with an article ("a" or "the"). Adding an article would not affect the scope of these claims nor make them any more clear. It is appreciated that the Examiner would write these claims differently, but The Examiner is reminded that the statute give the applicant of claiming that which "the applicant regards as his invention". See 35 USC § 112. Since the examiner failed failed to come up with any reasonable rationale as to why beginning a claim with "Process according to claim 1" or "The process according to claim 1" or "A process according to claim 1" makes any difference whatsoever, the applicant intends on relying on is statutory rights in this regard. Furthermore there are many many issued patents where the dependent claims are introduced in a similar fashion. It is too late in the

game for the USPTO to conjure up reasons why such claims forms are not permissible.

Claim 6 was rejected since “completing said process” is not defined to the Examiner’s satisfaction in this claim and the Examiner proposed two different alternatives for adding additional language to this claim. It is respectfully submitted that this claim does not need to spell how a process can be completed. The specification already deals with this issue.

Claim 9 has been amended to deal with the issue raised by the Examiner on page 4 of the Official Action.

The Examiner asserts that claim 14 recites both apparatus and method steps. That assertion is not correct. Claim 14 is an apparatus claim reciting a means for performing certain functions. Functional language often looks much like the steps of a method, but the addition of the “means for” converts the steps of a method into a structural limitation. The rejection is without merit.

The assertion that claims 14-16 not do limit the claims from which they depend is also without merit. Indeed, the argument put forth by the Examiner demonstrates as much. If the claims could co-exist as independent claims (as suggested by the Examiner), that means that they have somewhat different scopes. If they have somewhat different scopes, then they are proper dependent claims. No additional claim fees are due. Dependent claims are claims which depend from another claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-2, 5, 12, 14, and 17-18 are rejected as being fully anticipated by Buse (GB 2356111). This ground for rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to indicated that the first timer is started “in response to detecting said request.” However, even without this

amendment it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish themselves from Buse.

Buse describes a proxy agent that is provided which discovers network devices that do not have an assigned IP address and issues a DHCP request on their behalf. In claim 1, for example, recites "detecting in said at least one device a request for network parameters issued from a newly connected requesting device." The process of claim 1 requires that the device in which a description of the network environment has been established detects a request for network parameters issued from a newly connected requesting device. In other words, an existing device already connected to the network detects a request for network parameters transmitted from a newly connected device. In Buse the existing network device is represented by the proxy, which is arranged to periodically transmit across the entirety of the network an interrogation, identified in Buse as a frame having the "are you there" op-code. All the remaining devices connected to the network respond to this interrogation by providing a reply that includes the IP address of the individual network devices. A newly connected device on the network is identified by virtue of its IP address being set to an invalid value such as 0.0.0.0. (see page 3, lines 20-25 of Buse). The network proxy then resolves an IP address for the newly connected device before transmitting the IP address back to the newly connected network device. Consequently, the transmission from the newly connected network device to the proxy in Buse is merely a reply to an earlier interrogation transmission from the proxy and is not a request for network parameters, as required by claim 1 (see the language quoted above). Similar language can be found in claim 6 and has been added to claim 17.

The amendments made to claims 1 and 6 further distinguish those claims from Buse.

Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 08-2025. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, then the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136 (a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 08-2025.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on

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